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The Inevitable Evils and Results of War.

The conflict in South Africa is putting again on canvas before all eyes the evils which always attend war — any real war. It is difficult to discriminate among these evils and to say which are the worst. To a cultivated Christian conscience they are all revolting, and there is very little difference in their immorality.

The flower of the young men of both nations, from the standpoint of physical strength, are being cut off by thousands. Many of the sons of the best homes of all classes in England and her colonies are already dead, slain by shot and shell, or by the deadly diseases which war lets loose. Of the Boers the same is true, though we hear less of them. Large numbers are sent home maimed for life, to be always hereafter a burden to themselves, to their kin and to the nation. It is impossible to estimate the immense loss to field, to factory, to trade, to church, to politics, which this sacrifice of the strong young men is inflicting upon both England and South Africa. It is an irrecoverable loss to the world.

Then one must not forget the blighted homes, the blasted hopes of families far away from the field of blood, for most of which the nation can never do anything, for which, in most cases, it will not even attempt or care to do anything.

The economic waste of the war is something staggering. Money is being devoured in sums never before paralleled — the money of a nation which could use it perhaps better for the good of the world than any other, and is therefore most guilty for not so using it. Think of the war budget just brought into the British parliament and doggedly, even haughtily accepted — *seven hundred and sixty millions* of dollars for the year just opening! The aggregate war debt of Europe has increased for thirty years at the rate of *five hundred million* dollars a year. England

alone seems likely to add that amount this year, and her course has aroused the other nations to greatly enlarge their expenditures. Greater taxation must result and greater burdens be laid upon the backs of the groaning peoples, and greater neglect of the civic interests of the nation follow.

One of the deepest and most enduring evils of war is race and national hatred. In this respect the present war is peculiarly unfortunate. The hatred of the Dutch for the English has steadily increased since they were conquered and driven from the cape, and the farther they have been forced inland by the English, the more the English have despised *them*. The present war has fanned these feelings into such intensity that whatever the outcome of the struggle, a century of peace cannot allay them, and the century of peace is sure not to come. The war has aroused intense hatred of England all over the continent of Europe, especially in the Netherlands. Throughout the United States, also, among the masses of the people, the old dislike of England has been revived, and no such condemnation of her has been heard in many a year. Out of this inter-racial and international hatred a great crop of mischief is sure to come in its time. Many of the wisest and farthest-sighted men in England prophecy that it will ultimately cost England the whole of South Africa, if not the integrity of her empire; and that means more fierce hatred, bloodshed and desolation in the years before us. It is amazing that statesmen's eyes are forever closed to these things!

War creates a cold and reckless disregard of human life both on the part of the nation and the individual. Scenes of blood day after day, the constant sight of men shot down at their side, render soldiers incapable of feeling that fine appreciation of the value of human existence which Christian sentiments and Christian culture create. Out of this callousness in part springs much of that bold and reckless dash which passes under the name of "courage" and "fine behavior" under fire. The same callousness extends to the nation. In its self-righteousness, pride and ambition of victory, the government would send every able-bodied man of the people to death at the cannon's mouth. Grief for losses is suffered in the homes from which the dead

have gone, but the men who are leading the game, and the nation at large which blindly follows them, care little for the general losses, except as they affect the prospect of victory. Victoria herself, noblest of queens, grieves her heart out over the losses of her "brave men" so long as defeat is met with; as soon as victory comes, no matter how great the numbers slain on both sides, she becomes exultant with child-like delight. This is one of the saddest aspects of the brutalizing effects of war, the loss of the sense of the sacredness and value of human life. The Transvaal struggle, on the part of both Briton and Boer, is exhibiting it in a degree almost worthy of the heartlessness of Napoleon.

The horrors of a siege have rarely been more loathsome than those of Ladysmith recently relieved. Into such an event seem compacted all the personal and national pride, blindness, fatalism, perversion of heart and disregard of life, of which war is so full. One must of course admire in the abstract the self-possession and power of endurance displayed, but these only set off the more clearly the falseness and baseness of the ideals which compel such groveling sufferings and such a loathsome death. The siege of Ladysmith, from the point of view of both besieged and besiegers, is the very antipodes of all that is Christian and truly human. In private life not a vestige of it would for a moment be allowed.

The deepest of the evils of war, the one most ruinous and lasting in its effects, is to be found in the demoralization and degradation of the national life. Everything else gives way to the war spirit. Men are possessed with it, women are full of it, children feed upon it. Ministers of the gospel of peace go down on their knees to the war-god, and shout his praises from the sacred desk. The press is steeped in war feeling, the literature of the period breathes out its poison, the thought, the interest, the prayers, the dreams of the people are of war. Self-laudation, cursing of the foe, prevail. Intolerance lifts high its hand, freedom of speech trembles for its very existence. Kill, kill! Triumph, conquer! Down with the enemy! Vengeance for the past! That is the spirit which prevails.

How largely this is true of Great Britain to-day! In their simpler and more ignorant way it is true of the Boers. They are said heretofore to have been an unwarlike, peace-loving people. They cannot come out of the present struggle, into which the whole nation has thrown itself, if they come out of it unannihilated, without the taint of militarism deep in their blood. Great Britain cannot again, at least in the near future, be what she has been. She will come back from South Africa with both hands of European militarism at her throat and disgraced in the eyes of all the best of the world. Unless the sane men of the land, so many, so strong, so noble, so heroic, shall prevail, as we pray that they may, in

their efforts to stay the onrushing tide, there is grave reason to fear that what President David Starr Jordan said in Chicago recently will prove true, that "this century will see the downfall of Great Britain." A nation which, as Herbert Spencer said of England the other day, displays in its shouts of "Remember Majuba!" "the same passion as the lowest savages who make blood-revenge a primary duty," and allows this spirit to possess it and rule its policies must, as Dr. Jordan further said, "inevitably reach a speedy decay."

The Permanent Court of Arbitration.

The action of the Senate on the Hague Convention providing for a permanent international court of arbitration was awaited with some anxiety by many persons who remembered the rejection of the Anglo-American arbitration treaty. But it appears that there was no real ground for this anxiety. At the end of January we were assured by a letter from a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs that the Convention would be reported favorably and that there was no opposition to it among members of the Senate.

The Convention accordingly was ratified by the Senate in executive session on the 5th of February, by just what sort of a vote we have not seen revealed. As the session was a brief one, the vote was doubtless practically unanimous. The ratification, though one of the most important acts of the Senate in recent years, attracted so little public attention that most of the newspapers devoted but half a dozen lines to it, and some of the leading weeklies and monthlies none at all. The secrecy of the proceedings doubtless accounts in considerable measure for this, and the lack of debate and strife of opinion for some more of it.

This action of our Senate assures the early setting up of the court. Without the coöperation of this country the scheme could hardly have gone forward. With the most of the other nations represented at The Hague, the signing of the Convention at the close of the Conference was virtually equal to ratification. Our Senate, therefore, held the key to the whole situation, and its prompt and hearty action is worthy of highest commendation. We have no doubt that its action represents the wishes of the great body of the people.

There will be no exchange of ratifications. The Convention provided that each ratification should be deposited with the Netherlands government at The Hague. The ratification of our Senate, signed by the President, will be sent to Minister Newell to be deposited at the Netherlands capital. When the ratifications are all in, the government of each of the twenty-six signatory Powers will within three months name not more than four persons of acknowledged